The Saskatchewan Trucking Sector Partnership

Phase Three

June, 2001

FINAL REPORT

Acknowledgements

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 *Background*

1.1.1 Phase I Funding

The Saskatchewan Trucking Sector Partnership (STSP) was established in October, 1997, through funding by the Sector Partnerships Program of Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training. Through this funding the STSP conducted a detailed and thorough human resource and training needs assessment study, which concluded with a final report that was released in May, 1998.

1.1.2 Phase II Funding

Human Resources Development Canada provided funding through the Local Labour Market Partnership Program (LLMP) to undertake implementation of the strategies developed in the Human Resource and Training Needs Assessment Study from Phase I. The project entailed examining in detail the training needs for dispatchers, technicians and drivers.

Highlights from Phase I and II, which resulted from the work of the Saskatchewan Trucking Sector Partnership, are:

- Increased awareness of the needs of the trucking industry in the province through communication, reports, involvement in committee work and individuals and organizations talking and promoting the work of the partnership;
- Improved knowledge of issues that impact the industry, including carriers, the recognized training providers, drivers, government, aboriginal organizations and businesses involved in the trucking industry through participation in work placements, committee work and individual discussions;
- The development of a driver training program which could potentially become the minimum standard for entry into the industry by incorporating components of training programs from Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) the STA and SIAST; and
- The development of a very structured and detailed process for the recruitment, selection, training, placement and employment for new drivers for the industry that is built on participation, communication and commitment.

1.1.3 Phase III Funding

Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training (PSEST) provided Phase III funding to the Saskatchewan Trucking Sector Partnership Steering Committee to implement strategies and recommendations in response to needs identified in the first two phases. The following activities were undertaken:

- In partnership with SIAST, training providers and CSCES centers, deliver and evaluate two driver training pilot programs including co-ordination, recruitment and screening of participants.
- In partnership with SIAST, other training providers and CSCES centers, explore options for the future delivery of a dispatcher training pilot program that will address industry's needs for trained personnel to work as dispatchers including recruitment and retention strategies.
- Continue on-going communications with CSCES centers, training providers, industry and Aboriginal organizations regarding the pilot programs.
- Develop and implement strategies for the continuation of the STSP without additional funding from PSEST.

2.0 Report Objectives

The objectives listed below relate to the results of Phase III:

- Summarize the results of the two driver training pilot programs;
- Outline options for future delivery of a dispatcher training pilot program;
- Identify an on-going communications strategy; and
- Develop strategies for the continuation of the STSP without additional funding from PSEST.

3.0 Steering Committee Participation

The role of the Steering Committee was to provide leadership and direction to the project. Their expertise and background were utilized to provide insight into the research and processes developed in order to deliver the pilot driver programs. They were largely responsible for giving input and feedback to the pilot program and assess the results. They attended meetings and participated in the delivery of the two pilot driver training programs. The committee also provided input and feedback into the final report. They contributed their time and expenses as in-kind contributions to the project.

Initial carrier involvement and participation was quite good, however, toward the end of Phase III, industry involvement was almost non-existent in spite of extensive effort to retain their participation.

4.0 Driver Training Programs

Two driver training programs were delivered and each served as a pilot for the purposes of addressing areas where improvement was needed. STA and SIAST Woodland Campus shared in the delivery of these two programs. Extensive review and changes were made during and following the first program, which was offered during the fall and early winter of 1999. This was in addition to the development of a whole series of documents prior to commencement of the first program.

Trimension Group, under the direction of the Sector Partnership Steering Committee, provided the resources and the staff to research and develop the documentation process and consulted with members of the Steering Committee for feedback and input. The documents that were produced and subsequently revised following the first pilot program could continue to serve as a valuable resource for future delivery of the driver training program. The list of documents developed is as follows:

- Carrier introduction letter;
- Memorandum of Agreement;
- Responsibility sheets for:
  - Employers/Sponsors;
  - Students; and
  - Applicants.
- STSP Overview;
- Advertisement sample;
- Poster sample;
- Information package for use at orientation;
- Application Form;
- Interview Guide;
- Information package on sponsorship for students including:
  - Letter to applicants;
  - Selection letter on behalf of applicants.
- Letters of acceptance to funding agencies;
- Cost/Price list;
- Training information; and
- Verification forms for on-the-job training.

The results of the first program were validated in terms of the recruitment, selection and training by the STSP. The Steering Committee members recommended that, based on the evaluation of the program there was a need to conduct a second program to address those areas where improvement was needed. The members felt that the industry recognized that this program was very near to setting a training standard that would be acceptable by industry and by offering a second program would demonstrate a commitment on our part. This in turn could possibly lead to increased industry buy-in and support for the on-going sustainability of the STSP and having an industry standard training program.

The second driver training pilot grogram received approval and funding was provided, but at a reduced level to proceed. The program was scheduled to begin in November, 2000, with the in-school portion completed prior to Christmas and the work placement to begin early January, 2001, and completed by early March, 2001. The program breakdown was:

- 7 weeks in school; and
- 9 weeks on-the-job training.

Process wise, the recruitment, selection and training steps that were put in place aided in moving through the process easier for the second program. However, the issue of sponsorship and funding arose which prevented attaining two full courses of twelve (12) each. Some of the factors that influenced the low enrolment were:

- there was difficulty in students being successful in qualifying for student loan funding;
- some employment counselors felt the cost was prohibitive and other driver training programs were available at a lower cost;
- some potential students didn't want to participate in such a long program when there are other programs available that are much shorter in length;
- there were some who applied that didn't meet the selection criteria due to various reasons; and
- there was limited industry involvement in the selection of the students.

Despite the low enrolments, both STA and SIAST proceeded with the in-school portion of the training at the scheduled time. The feedback from them on the revised process, with the exception of the issue over sponsorship was positive. They indicated:

- the carriers were involved in the orientation and selection process, as well as making available placement sites; and
- the recruitment process went satisfactorily.

As a result of the experience gained over the course of the two driver training programs, both the STA and SIAST Woodland Campus have expressed reluctance to continue in the delivery of any subsequent driver training programs until there are substantial changes in the issues around funding and carriers support toward a need for higher standard of training. During the course of the delivery of these programs, both have indicated a significant amount of time and finances were invested that weren't recoverable. However, both parties are open to more discussion on the subject as long as there is any possibility to supply a better product to the industry by way of better trained, safer drivers.

The summary results of the two programs are as follows:

- STA and SIAST provided the formal in-school training for each program;

- A total of 16 students attended the in-school training in which 15 students were successful in attaining their Class 1A license;
- Of these, 14 students went on and participated in the work place practicum with a partner carrier and 6 successfully completed their O-J-T;
- All of the 6 who completed the O-J-T did obtain employment and five did it with their work placement sponsoring carrier;
- Of the 8 who did not complete the O-J-T portion of the program, a number of them went on and found employment themselves either by choosing to go drive with a relative or another driver they personally knew;
- There are also a couple of individuals who did receive their Class 1A license who are still planning on continuing after they have addressed some of their personal matters.

Overall, the two pilot programs did accomplish the original purpose, which was to establish a training program that could be considered meeting the industry standard for entry level drivers and provide employment opportunity to individuals interested in truck driving as a career.

The complete evaluation results of the two driver training programs are attached to this report and can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Key findings of the these two evaluations were as follows:

- Co-ordination is key to the success of the delivery of the training programs. However, it is difficult to obtain funding to offset co-ordination costs. It is found that:
  - Separating out all tasks that are required to implement, deliver and evaluation the program to a number of partners doesn't work;
  - A central secretariat is needed to ensure all the steps in the process that were developed are followed.
- There was a good response from carriers regarding them to act as hosts for the job placement. The ones involved showed a genuine interest. They did hire those students that were at their site for the O-J-T.
- Those students who completed the whole program were successful in obtaining employment and all are working in the industry.
- The interaction between the two training providers (STA and SIAST Woodland Campus) and the Canada Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services offices was seen as a positive experience in that it not only aided people to move forward in their career determination, but it also provided an excellent opportunity for the employment counselors to become more familiar with the trucking industry through participation on the STSP. This provided a forum for the training providers (SIAST/STA) and funding agencies to become more informed of the issues and needs of all the partners in the partnership. This was experience that provided for more appreciation of the tasks at hand.
- Funding or sponsorship is an issue in that those who passed the screening process, only a small percentage were able to secure funding to attend the training. There needs to be a way to encourage support for those who want to take the training, who meet the program

requirements, have a job placement and are deemed suitable, but then don't qualify for sponsorship. With the present support being for those who are on social assistance, reach back, employment insurance or student loan eligible, a large market is being missed. There needs to be some way to encourage more tuition paying and carrier sponsorship of new drivers.

- A long term commitment by the industry to only hire people who have completed a recognized training program and, in particular the STSP program, is needed. The industry, despite those supporting the program, in general do not request or inquire as to whether a person who they are interviewing for a job has completed formal training. In many cases, the carriers say they want qualified drivers, but there is a difference of perception or opinion on what makes a person qualified and training is not in large a part of the equation. There needs to be more emphasis placed on the need for setting minimum training standards, but at the present time these appear not to be the case either for the driver or the will by industry to move in that direction at any speed. There is a need to sell this to industry before any progress or advancement is made. More grass roots work needs to be done to ensure there is support by the industry.
- The concept of the driver training program developed by the STSP is good. There have been advancements made and there has been success. The success to date has been a result of the efforts of the STSP. However, due to the lack of participation, the members felt, for the time being, to discontinue the delivery of the driver training program as it presently stands.
- The course costs and course length is a factor that has deterred people from wanting to enroll in the program. With the decision to enroll in a training program largely left up to the client, many prefer to take a shorter program that is available throughout the province and, at a much lesser cost. The cost is a determining factor, whether its emphatically stated or not, and is very often encouraged by the person advising or counseling the client.
- The two neighboring provinces on each side of Saskatchewan have made advances to having an industry standard driver training program. Lessons can be learned from them on how they were able to achieve success. More dialogue and consultation is needed to fully understand how each was able to get where they are today. The STSP has the basis of an industry standard driver training program, what is needed now is to learn from them how to implement the program and make it a success.
- There has been an increased awareness of the human resource and training needs within the industry and the public. The STSP can take credit for much of this through the training that has taken place and the communication that goes on in circles where members travel. The members of the STSP have been good ambassadors and kept a positive perspective on the achievements. The STSP has done the groundwork and there is a demonstrated need, as no one is disputing that fact, everybody truly believes education and training is the way to go and in the end the standard will go up.
- The experience and the results of the work done by the STSP will be invaluable if the time comes when the industry chooses to move in the direction of standardized training.

- Over the past three years, strong alliances have been built amongst the members of the STSP Steering Committee. However, industry participation was very limited and will need to be enhanced if in the future the need for a program of this nature becomes recognized and required.

5.0 Dispatcher Training

Through the course of the project, SIAST researched Dispatcher training in other jurisdictions. There have been developments occurring in Ontario and the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) and there appears to be a move to developing dispatcher training for distance delivery mode. The focus is on improving the skills and knowledge of existing dispatchers, so this approach would appear the most appropriate. Indications are that within a year there could be a program available in CD Rom and Web-based formats.

The Dispatcher Essential Skills Profile and Assessment Tool has been developed by the CTHRC and the STSP will be able to access the report and the assessment tool for future work when it comes to dispatcher training.

6.0 Communications

While there is going to be a deferral for the time being in the delivery of the STSP driver training program, on-going communication with the industry, Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services offices, training providers and aboriginal organizations is necessary.

To support this need, this final report will be distributed. The members of the STSP Steering Committee all have their own network in which to communicate and distribute the report. The process will involve:

- PSEST distributing to their list of people and departments within government;
- Each committee member will distribute to their appropriate partners or stakeholders;
- The STA can communicate results in their newsletter to their members; and
- The report will be provided to the Aboriginal training institutions and the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Council of Canada.

7.0 Sustainability

One of the key objectives of this phase of the STSP was to develop and implement strategies for the continuation of the STSP without additional core funding from PSEST. Lack of industry involvement and participation has impacted on the sustainability of the STSP, resulting in this group recommending that its activities be held in abeyance until such time as industry is able to provide a leadership role for implementation of the strategies and recommendations in this report.

8.0 Recommendations

The key recommendation in order for the STSP to continue is to have industry in co-operation with the training providers, namely SIAST and STA, to develop a strategy to sustain the STSP. If this were to happen, the recommendation is then to explore implementing the following strategies:

Training

1. Funding and cost of training have to be addressed to make it more equitable and affordable to the clients; therefore training needs to be subsidized in some form;

2. More education and promotion to the industry on the improvement through training in the quality of good drivers can be more economically achieved through the STSP industry standard driver training program;

3. The driver training schools in Saskatchewan need to work toward setting a common training standard that represents industry's needs and work is needed to gain support from the funding agencies and regulatory bodies;

4. There needs to be some tracking and follow-up with the successful graduates of the two programs to prove the training did achieve the goals of the program and the project;

5. Meetings with Student Loans and discussions have to take place to get the Driver Training Program qualified under Student Loans;

6. Work needs to continue on establishing this Driver Training Program as a certificate program, and also as the industry standard because education and knowledge are too important, no matter where one who graduates ends up driving.

Partnership Sustainability

1. The industry needs to sustain the STSP by providing resources and support;

2. The benefits and the achievements of the STSP have to be communicated to the industry and the public;

3. The STSP has to influence change by:
   - Educating the public;
   - Educating the employment counselors and funders;
   - Educating the potential students;
   - Educating the parents; and
   - Working together to make people informed on what the trucking industry is about.

4. The STSP needs to follow what the other provinces are doing in setting the standards and funding and communicate this to the industry and the stakeholders;

5. The STSP needs to continue meeting, whether it is on a regular schedule or on an as needed basis;

6. The Saskatchewan Trucking Association or another entity has to take over the role of the secretariat for the STSP and at the same time review the make-up of the STSP membership;

7. Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) needs to play a prominent role in the STSP because of their mandate as it relates to licensing, regulations and training delivery standards.

APPENDIX A: Evaluation Report – First Driver Training Program

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1.0 Introduction

In April 1999 the members of the Saskatchewan Trucking Sector Partnership Driver's Task Team collectively submitted a proposal to Saskatchewan Post Secondary Education and Skills Training (PSEST) to solicit support for a pilot program to train truck drivers. The pilot was modeled after the **Manitoba Trucking Industry Education Advisory Council (MTIEAC)** program, which has seen great success over the last 10 years. The pilot included the recruitment, screening, and training of individuals for a career in truck driving. After 6 weeks of in-class and in-cab training, candidates participated in 6 weeks of on-the-job training with a carrier. This report is the evaluation of the pilot.

2.0 Project Goals and Objectives

The objective of the Driver's Task Team is to address recruitment, retention, entry level and on-the-job training issues, as identified in the provincially funded phase of the Saskatchewan Trucking Sector Partnership. The pilot was developed to address each of these issues in the following manner.

- The pilot will address issues of recruitment and retention through the careful selection of candidates. A thorough recruitment and screening process will identify individuals suitable for a career as a truck driver, helping to ensure their long-term commitment to the career.

- The training providers will deliver the Canadian Trucking Human Resource Council's *Earning Your Wheels* (EYW) curriculum in an effort to address the issue of common training standards.

- Carrier commitment to on-the-job training will address the lack of on-the-job experience among new drivers. As well, it will provide the carrier the opportunity to evaluate and hire a candidate and will provide job opportunities to trainees.

- A long-term evaluation strategy will see candidates tracked for employment and safety, and compared with drivers trained at the same time in other programs.

3.0 Pilot Overview

Crucial to the success of the pilot is the careful selection of candidates suitable for truck driving. Candidates went through a rigorous screening process, which provided them with information about the realities of truck driving. The following outlines the criteria, orientation, application, and interview process.

Criteria: individuals must meet certain basic criteria to be considered for the program.

- Possess a valid Saskatchewan drivers license;
- Have at least 2 years driving experience with a minimum Class 5 license;
- Cannot be on a probationary license;

- Cannot be in a surchargeable position;
- For international drivers, must be able to enter the US legally and commercially (Be 21 years of age and have no criminal convictions);
- Applicants will be asked to sign off on a criminal record search;
- Applicants will be asked to sign off on a drug and alcohol test;
- Must take a qualifying test. Reading comprehension is a component of the exam.

- **Orientation:** Before they apply, candidates and their family members must attend a 2-hour orientation where they are given a true picture of life as a truck driver.

- **Application**: After the orientation and the basic criteria are met, the individual fills out an application and signs a declaration advising they are aware of what is involved in the program. On the application, applicants must indicate they are willing to undergo drug and alcohol testing and a criminal record search. They are also asked to give consent to have SGI track their license for their safety record. They must attach a copy of their resume to the application to be considered for an interview.

- **Interview:** The *STSP* or a sub-committee will interview the applicants to determine the best suitable candidates for the trucking industry.

- **Carrier interviews & sponsorship**: Participating carriers will interview selected candidates and have the choice as to who they would like to participate in the training and take as a trainee. Prior to the interview process, the candidate will be given a letter of introduction to present to potential sponsors and participating carriers will be provided the names of the candidates. Once the candidate finds a sponsor, the STSP will follow up to confirm sponsorship.

  The carrier will be provided with training for driver coaches, if required and requested.

- **Funding**: Canada-Saskatchewan Career & Employment Services has been involved in the development of the program. Once the candidate has obtained a sponsor, a letter of acceptance will be provided to the candidate and the local CSCES centre. Information regarding incidental and direct costs of the program will also be provided. It is the responsibility of each individual candidate to negotiate funding.

- **Acceptance and beginning the program**: Applicants who are accepted must produce a Class 1 beginner's license, with air, within 30 days of the date they applied or on the first day of class.

- **The training program**: Training providers who meet the requirements of the STSP will deliver the in-class and in-cab portions of training using the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council's, *Earning Your Wheels* curriculum. The sponsoring carrier will provide on-the-job training in the form of an internship with an experienced driver.

- **Certification:** The students are given a certificate of completion by the STSP.

4.0 Partners

The intent of the pilot was to recruit individuals with the greatest likelihood of success as a driver. A variety of organizations and individuals played critical roles in bringing the pilot to fruition. Below is an overview of each stakeholder's involvement.

The **STSP Driver's Task Team** developed the pilot process and goals, provided guidance and support and guided the evaluation. Certain members of the Driver's Task Team were significantly involved in the recruitment and screening process, taking time to review applications and interview applicants.

Saskatchewan Post Secondary Education and Skills Training provided the funding to co-ordinate the activities of the pilot. PSEST also provided assistance throughout the development and delivery of the pilot.

Trimension Group acted as co-ordinator for the *STSP*, Driver's Task Team and the pilot.

The **individual candidates** were responsible for meeting the criteria of the *STSP*, securing sponsorship with a participating carrier, completing the requirements of the driver training course and meeting his or her obligations to the sponsoring company. Candidates were eligible for the Skills Training Benefit through EI or reachback.

The **sponsoring carriers** were responsible for providing the candidates with on-the-job training and providing a reasonable expectation of offering employment to the individual upon successful completion of the training. They participated in updating the training provider on the candidate's progress and in the evaluation of the pilot.

Canada-Saskatchewan Career & Employment Services provided funding for the training of selected candidates through the Skills Training Benefit. They assisted in communication with applicants and in the evaluation of the pilot.

Training providers participated in recruiting participating carriers, the orientations, application review and interviews. They provided 6 weeks in-class and in-cab training to candidates and assisted in on-going support throughout the workplacements.

5.0 Expected Outcomes

Prior to the pilot, the Driver's Task Team identified expected outcomes for each of the involved parties. These were:

The **carrier** will have the opportunity to hire an individual carefully screened and trained. Over the long term, the carrier will have contributed to the advancement of a training and screening program designed to produce suitable and certified drivers. This will help in addressing the industry's need for well-trained Class 1A drivers and in addressing issues of driver retention. As well, this program will be accessible to all carriers, large and small, and will save them valuable time through the pre-screening process.

The **training participant**, upon completion of the program, will have obtained his or her Class 1A license through excellent training and on-the-job experience. She/he will have an opportunity for employment with the sponsoring carrier and, through thorough training and industry experience, will have gained an advantage over other drivers for employment.

Training providers will gain the assurance that their students will have a job placement to complete their training. They will have further developed their relationships with carriers, funding agencies and each other. These groups will work together in addressing issues of recruitment.

The **funding agencies** will have the opportunity to evaluate the success of the program and through the evaluation process, will gain the assurance their funding dollars were allocated to the benefit of the participants.

6.0 Evaluation

Evaluations of the pilot were conducted with the partners at various points throughout the pilot.

- The **carriers** were called after they interviewed candidates to get their feedback on the candidates.

- On the final day of in-cab training, the coordinator met with the Saskatoon **trainees** to get their feedback on the recruitment and screening process and the training they had received thus far. Trainees in Regina and Prince Albert were provided with a questionnaire covering these issues.

- Near the end of the on-the-job training component, **carriers** were interviewed by telephone to assess the performance of the trainee and solicit feedback to improve the pilot.

- After the on-the-job training, **trainees** were interviewed by telephone to gather feedback on their on-the-job training experience and their current employment status.

- At this point as well, the **Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Service Centres** in Saskatoon, Regina, and Prince Albert were provided with a questionnaire to solicit their feedback on communications, the recruitment and screening process and their willingness to participate in another intake.

The results of these discussions, interviews and questionnaires are appendixed to this report. What follows is an evaluation of each component of the pilot based on input from the partners.

6.1 Recruitment

In order to advertise the orientation, advertisements were placed in the Regina *LeaderPost* and the Prince Albert *Daily Herald.* As well, posters were placed in the Career & Employment Service centres in Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon. Interested individuals were asked to

register with Career & Employment Services and it was recommended that their spouse or partner attend.

6.2 The Criteria

The initial criteria for screening form the baseline for the review of applications. While the criteria met industry standards, they should only provide the first set of measure to screen candidates and must be surpassed to ensure the best quality candidates. There are a few items that are recommended for change. These are:

- *Cannot be in a surchargeable position.* Requiring a clean driver's abstract may be a better indicator of a person's responsibility and history behind the wheel.
- *For international drivers, must be able to enter the US legally and commercially (be 21 years of age and have no criminal convictions).* There does not seem to be a need for eliminating anyone under the age of 21, as carriers may not choose to send their trainee to the United States immediately.
- *Must take a qualifying test. Reading comprehension is a component of the exam.* At this point, the consensus is to continue to administer some type of test. However, issues of cost, type of test and administration time have yet to be dealt with.

6.3 The Orientation

Before they apply candidates and their family members must attend a 2-hour orientation where they are given a true picture of life as a truck driver.

The concept of such an orientation was very well received by all partners. The orientation provided information about trucking to a large group of people. It was an opportunity for interested individuals to ask questions of a carrier. Emphasis was placed on family participation and the impact of driving on the family, as this is one significant barrier to retention. Speakers at the orientation, both carriers and drivers, and students suggested ways of improving the session:

- ***Recommendation**: Providing carriers and drivers who speak at orientation with information about what is expected of them.*

  ***Action**:* An information package highlighting details of the pilot and a suggested topics list has been developed for distribution to speakers prior to the orientation.

- ***Recommendation**: Make it clear to applicants when they should be purchasing certain supplies and what documentation they need prior to their training.*

  Action: For example, students did not need to purchase steel-toed boots prior to their on-the-job training (OJT). Some did and found they did not need them. Also, students did not need to conduct a drug and alcohol test or a criminal record search. These points have been clarified in the documentation.

6.4 Applying to the program

After the orientation and the basic criteria are met, the individual fills out an application and signs a declaration advising they are aware of what is involved in the program. They must also attach a resume to their application in order to be considered for an interview.

In the pilot a brief application form was used to gather personal information (address, social insurance number, etc.) about the applicant as well as information pertaining to the criteria. This application did not provide enough information to the committee reviewing applications and there were some difficulties with the consistency of the screening process. More specifically, certain applicants' health were in question, which was only discovered during on-the-job training. As well, applicants were asked to attach a resume to the application and to bring their driver's abstract to the interview. This posed a difficulty as some applicants were disqualified on the basis of their driver's abstract, but the time was still taken in the interview.

Actions to rectify these problems have been taken.

- The application form has been redesigned according to feedback from the carriers and the experiences of the committee reviewing the application. In addition, the application form has been redesigned according to *Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission* guidelines. These changes include:
    - Because the applicant population is quite mobile, the applicant is asked to provide alternate contact information.
    - A brief description of the rigours of trucking is given and the applicant is asked if she/he is willing to work the required schedule of the carrier. This is to re-enforce their understanding of what is involved in the program.
    - They are asked about any health problems that would prevent them from safely operating a vehicle. This is to ensure consistent screening of individuals that may have health difficulties.
    - Applicants are asked if they have ever undergone career counselling or research and, if so, what the results were. This is to help the committee assess how thoroughly the applicant has thought through his or her decision in order to help them have a successful experience.
- Applicants will be asked to attach their resume and a copy of their driver's abstract to their application form. This will enable the committee to screen for poor driving records prior to the interviews.
- It has been made clear on the application form that an incomplete application package will preclude applicants from an interview. This will help ensure that the applicant gives serious consideration to his/her choices.

6.5 Application Review

A committee, including a carrier, the training providers and the coordinator, reviewed the applications and shortlisted candidates for interviews. The application, resume and test scores were each weighed in the decision making. 34 of the 42 applicants were shortlisted. There was some debate over what type of standards to apply to the applications. The committee acted on a

consensus basis and in those applications where there was a split decision or uncertainty, the applicant was put on the interview list. This was to ensure that the committee would interview enough applicants to recommend to the carriers.

In order to ensure a more thorough application review, the application form has been redesigned to provide more specific information and applicants are required to attach their driver's abstract and resume.

6.6 Interview

The STSP or a sub-committee will interview the applicants to determine the best suitable candidates for the trucking industry.

The committee, who reviewed the applications consisted of the two training providers, a carrier and the coordinator. Interviews were conducted in Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon and were scheduled every 20 minutes. The MTIEAC interview guide was used. Candidates were selected in a similar method to the application review: the committee discussed each individual and reached a consensus.

While the committee used many of the questions of the MTIEAC guide, the guide was found to be rather cumbersome and some questions were too broad for the committee's purposes. This resulted in some inconsistencies in the interview process. For example, not everyone was asked about health problems that would impede their ability to drive. As well, the committee had not agreed to clear criteria nor had they defined the ultimate goal of the interview. There was debate over whether the committee should select those people who were trainable or those who were employable. As this is a very subjective judgement and there was a limited amount of time, the committee compromised between selecting enough individuals to send to carrier interviews and selecting candidates who seemed ideally suited to the career. It should be noted that the recruitment drive had not produced many candidates who were ideally suited to trucking. Below are the changes that have been made and suggested to deal with these challenges.

Issue or feedback	Changes to program
• Cumbersome guide	The interview guide was refined. There are fewer but more specific questions designed to address specific comments from the carriers and meet accepted guidelines for interviewing.
• **Carrier feedback**: look for attitude, agriculture background, professional appearance, screen for people who want to do long or short haul	Questions were designed to help address these issues. Expected responses are included in the guide to help interviewers make an assessment.
• Approach & objective of interview	Prior to beginning the next interview process, the committee should meet to discuss their approach and their objectives.

6.7 Carrier interviews & sponsorship

Participating carriers will interview selected candidates and have the choice as to who they would like to participate in the training and take as a trainee. Prior to the interview process, the

candidate will be given a letter of introduction to present to potential sponsors and participating carriers will be provided the names of the candidates. Once the candidate finds a sponsor, the STSP will follow up to confirm sponsorship. The carrier will be provided with training for driver coaches, if required and requested.

Two and a half weeks were allotted to the carriers to conduct interviews, select candidates and sign the Memorandums of Agreement. Carriers interviewed as many candidates as they felt necessary, but no carrier interviewed more than 9. Students' training spots were secured on a first come first serve basis. After they had made their selection, carriers submitted the MoA to the training provider for the signature of the student.

Two and a half weeks was adequate time to conduct the carrier interviews if the candidate was local. If the candidate was from another city, time became an issue, as the logistics were more complicated. In their evaluation, students indicated that they did not feel they had enough time to find a sponsoring carrier. This, however, is due in part to the pressure candidates felt in being one of twenty people vying for fourteen spots.

Comments on the quality of the applicants have been discussed in the Overall Selection Process section of the report.

None of the carriers requested in-cab coach training.

6.8 Funding

Canada-Saskatchewan Career & Employment Services have been involved in the development of the program. Once the candidate has obtained a sponsor a letter of acceptance will be provided to the candidate and the local CSCES centre. Information regarding incidental and direct costs of the program will also be provided. It is the responsibility of each individual candidate to negotiate funding.

Students were funded through the Skills Training Benefit (STB), a program that offers financial support to individuals who are receiving Employment Insurance benefits or have received them within the last 3 years. STB can cover living expenses, tuition, books, supplies, and costs associated with caring for dependents. Where possible, individuals are expected to make a financial contribution to costs associated with training. When attending a student loan eligible institution, students may be required to apply for student loan funding to help cover costs. In the case of the *STSP* pilot, SIAST is a student loan eligible institution and Commercial Truck Services (CTS) was not; however, all of the students were funded through STB. While originally the program was devised to utilize block funding, since the transition of funds from the federal to provincial governments in January 1998, block funding has not been available for training. Therefore, funding is provided on a case-by-case basis and must be negotiated individually.

A list of costs, including tuition, was provided to each CSCES centre and the student. The *STSP*, in order to help ensure the student received sufficient funding for the on-the-road portion of training, suggested a $30 per diem be provided to student for on the road expenses while they were training on the job.

CSCES centres in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert were allotted approximately 2 weeks to process funding for their clients. As each centre remarked, 2 weeks is an acceptable minimum length of time to process funding for STB. If student loan applications must be made, then more time would be required.

As funding was negotiated by each student individually and in confidence, the STSP does not have complete information about levels of funding received by each student. In their evaluations, however, students were asked if the level of funding they received was adequate and fair. Student response was mixed; some felt the level of funding was fair, others felt it was not enough. There was some difficulty in processing funding in time for the beginning of class, but delays were not too lengthy. One student indicated that very little additional funding was provided for living expenses or expenses associated with commuting.

6.9 Acceptance and beginning the program

Applicants who are accepted must produce a Class 1 beginner's license with air within 30 days of the date they applied or on the first day of class.

Along with securing their funding, applicants needed to undergo a medical exam and write their Class 1 learners. A class 1 learners was required before the start of class and the carrier was left to decide if and when the drug and alcohol testing and criminal record search were to be conducted. In their evaluation, students indicated some confusion about what steps they were to take and when or what items listed on the cost list they were to purchase. For example, students bought steel toed boots for class and discovered they did not need them. These items have been made clear on the cost list, where the order of each step is explained. Please see appendix for revised cost list.

As a result of the closure of the *Transportation Careers Development Centre* prior to recruitment, SIAST and CTS offered to deliver classes in Saskatoon. As CTS had 6 students who could train in Saskatoon, they provided training here. Tuition costs were adjusted for this. Students expressed some confusion as to the location of classes as it had not been confirmed until the Friday prior to the course beginning. Confirming the location and informing students a few days prior to the start of the course would ease the confusion on this issue.

6.10 The training program

Training providers who meet the requirements of the STSP will deliver the in-class and in-cab portions of training using the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council's "Earning Your Wheels" curriculum. The sponsoring carrier will provide on-the-job training in the form of an internship with an experienced driver.

The training providers that participated in the pilot were SIAST Woodland Campus in Prince Albert and Commercial Truck Services in Regina. CTS also delivered training in Saskatoon. Eleven students received class 1 in-class and in-cab training; 10 trained with CTS, 1 with SIAST.

The training providers delivered the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council EYW curriculum. As the in-class and in-cab portions of EYW were intended to be delivered in 13 weeks, and the STSP pilot was designed to be delivered in 12 weeks, changes were made to the

EYW timelines. Rather than 7 weeks of in-class and in-cab training as outlined in EYW, those portions were delivered in 6 weeks in the pilot. The CTHRC allowed the use of the curriculum and the changes in the timelines in order to test-run the program in the pilot. Use of EYW allowed both training providers to deliver a common curriculum. This also allowed CTS to become familiar with EYW. SIAST had CTHRC designation and had delivered EYW prior to the pilot. Normally, training providers who wish to deliver CTHRC programs must apply for CTHRC accreditation, which carries an initial cost of approximately $5,000. In the interests of the pilot and in order to familiarize CTS with EYW, this accreditation was waived and replaced by a workshop session between SIAST and CTS.

In the 6 weeks with the training provider, students were exposed to various aspects of truck driving. These included:

- Shifting
- Cornering
- Judging intersections
- Highway driving
- Route planning
- Air tests
- Backing up
- Judging traffic conditions
- City driving
- Merging
- Pre-trip inspections
- Brake adjustments

Students spent 1 week in the classroom and 5 weeks in the cab. At the end of the 6 weeks they took their road tests. Training providers indicated that in a second intake, they would test students at the end of the 4th or 5th week. This would allow those students who had passed to perfect their skills and would provide an opportunity to further prepare those students who did not pass. Students indicated that this approach would reduce the stress of test day. As well, as some of the students did not pass their road test on the first attempt, there was a delay in starting OJT. Ensuring that students had their license well before the start of OJT would help prevent such a delay and the resulting administrative work for all partners.

Feedback from the training providers and the students indicate some difficulties with EYW. EYW is an intensive course and squeezing it into 6 weeks rather than 7 put some stress on the instructors and students. There was a lot of material to teach and to learn in a shortened timeframe. Students had a mixed reaction to the course content as well. Some indicated that the books were informative, others said they learned more from the instructors and videos. Students complained that reprints of bills of lading were unreadable and that information presented in the textbooks was inconsistent with answers on the tests. While some of the comments can be accounted for by different learning styles, others point to technical difficulties with the materials, for example proofreading and printing.

Generally, students related very positive experiences about their instructors. They felt the instructors were knowledgeable and professional and were able to teach them the skills they needed. As one student said, "They're teaching us how to drive a truck alright." Students indicated that the instructors could not answer all their questions about the pilot itself; it would help both the instructor and the student if the instructor were provided with more information about the pilot. Most of the students had more than one instructor. From their feedback, it seems that having two instructors per student has the most positive impact on what the student

learned. Students said that each instructor had a unique style of teaching and having techniques explained in more than one way can help a student learn. However, too many different styles of instruction can be confusing. One student found that each instructor taught how to do the same thing differently so she did not know which was the best way. Communication between the instructors on how they teach would help mitigate this. Students were also concerned about what would be expected on the road test. If two instructors at one institution could teach the same thing differently, they did not know what the SGI tester would expect. One student suggested that they get to spend time with two instructors; one to teach them how to driver and the other to teach them how to pass the road test.

Students felt that they received an adequate amount of training on all aspects of driving, except backing up and route planning. They commented that they could have used more time on these aspects.

Some students also indicated that there were breakdowns with trucks and different trucks, making it stressful and difficult to learn.

Once OJT had progressed, carriers had the opportunity to provide feedback on the training their student had received. Generally, the carriers were satisfied with the training.

6.11 On-the-job training

After the in-class and in-cab portion, students spend 6 weeks on-the-job training with their sponsoring carrier.

As students were still participating in a training program, they received provincial funding to assist with living and on the road expenses while training on-the-job. The following criteria for on-the-job training were outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement. The training providers were responsible for keeping in contact with the carriers and students to assess the OJT and deal with any problems.

- Situational driving – daytime, nighttime, city, highway, backing etc.
- Minimum 180 hours behind the wheel
- Vehicular inspections – pre-trip, air, en-route and post-trip
- Coupling and uncoupling of units
- Preparation and completion of company required paperwork
- Loading and off-loading of freight (carrier specific)
- Dispatch and operational procedures of the carrier
- Customer service (as per carrier's policy)
- Compliance with company policies

After the OJT, students were asked to evaluate the OJT and the pilot in general.

During their OJT, students fulfilled a variety of duties. Typically they progressed from yard work to on the road training. Their training on the road progressed from observing the trainer, to driving empty, to driving with a full load. The rate each student progressed depended on the

student and the carrier. Two of the students spent a considerable amount of time in the shop and yard, performing service checks and loading and unloading. They did not get as much time in a truck as they would have liked. In one case, the student indicated that he drove a tractor-trailer unit for half an hour. Lack of driving time seems to have contributed to this person leaving his workplacement early. Most of the students seemed to get a satisfactory amount of time driving. One student estimated he had driven 14,000 km; another said he had been on the road for 5 weeks and had spent "many hours" driving.

Students drove through much of Western Canada, mainly in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. They hauled fuel, ammonium nitrate, crushed lime, lime, feed and fertilizer.

Generally, all the students felt they had received an adequate amount of training and practice during their OJT in the following areas: shifting, backing up, cornering, judging traffic, judging intersections, city driving, highway driving, merging, pre-trip inspections, air tests and brake adjustments. Route planning was the only area they may have needed to spend more time on. One individual was dissatisfied with the amount of training he got in all of these areas.

The *STSP*, upon review of the student and carrier evaluations, discussed areas of improvement to the OJT. As there was not a system to record the activities of the OJT, it is unclear whether students received training in all aspects as outlined in the MoA. As well, one student had complained of the lack of driver training during his OJT and had quite his workplacement prematurely as a result. The *STSP* made the following recommendations:

- List the carriers' responsibilities during the OJT in the introductory material provided to carriers and in other appropriate areas of communication to ensure an understanding of the requirements.
- Provide information about the requirements to the in-cab coach.
- Provide forms to be filled out weekly marking the student's progress in each skill area.
- Training provider should gather progress information and communicate with carrier to ensure requirements are being met.

6.12 Overall Selection Process

In total, about 80 individuals attended the orientations in Saskatoon, Prince Albert, and Regina. Of those, 42 applied to the program and 34 were interviewed. 20 candidates were sent to the carrier interviews and 11 of those were finally selected by the carriers.

There was some dissatisfaction among the selection committee and the carriers with some of the candidates. The most common complaint among carriers was that candidates exhibited a lack of understanding and knowledge about trucking and the lack of commitment to being a truck driver. This complaint seems to be the result of two intersecting factors:

- some of the candidates were unacceptable to the carriers, they lacked a long term commitment, seemed to view this opportunity as a short term solution or they had an unprofessional appearance;
- some of the carriers were typically accustomed to interviewing and hiring drivers with experience. The candidates in the pilot generally had very little exposure to trucking.

While the orientation attempted to give candidates a picture of the trucking industry and truck driving, such a session alone cannot provide all of the knowledge and understanding that is required to make a major life decision. The evaluation from the CSCES in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert touched on this issue as well. In their experience, the most successful career path begins with in-depth research into a career area of interest and a personal review of the individuals likes, dislikes, skills and abilities. Services driven by the needs of the individual client result in a better success rate than an attempt to fill seats in a course. The CSCES indicated that a more successful recruitment process would see some integration of personal career planning and the *STSP* process. For example, this could include drawing the orientation participants from those individuals who have undergone the career search process and have expressed an interest in truck driving. While the details of such a possibility have not been discussed, an attempt has been made to assess the level of career research an individual has undergone in the application form.

6.13 Employment

Two of the goals of the pilot were to provide an employment opportunity to individuals interested in trucking and to provide a resource of well-trained drivers to carriers. At the time of the evaluations, 4 of the 11 students had found jobs as truck drivers, 3 of them with their sponsoring carrier. Of these four, two are employed full time and two are part-time. Of the remaining seven, one did not pass the Class 1A road test and six did not complete the OJT. Two of the individuals who did not complete their OJT still want to drive truck. One is waiting to hear about a job, and another has to wait to complete her workplacement for medical reasons.

For those who completed their OJT, their chances of finding employment are quite good. Four of the four who made it through the entire program are now working. The difficulties seem to arise just after licenses are issued and during the OJT. These are the times when most of the students dropped out, as demonstrated below.

- 2 students quit immediately after receiving their license. One cited financial difficulties; another was unwilling to relocate. Please note that for this Regina individual, relocation was not required as the Saskatoon company had a yard in Regina that he could have driven from.
- 2 individuals did not complete the OJT due to health reasons. One was allergic to the commodity, but did not find a workplacement anywhere else. One was diagnosed with long term back problems, but is determined to complete her OJT when her back has healed. The company in that case has offered her a job, contingent upon her passing the company medical.
- 2 students quit because of difficulties with their OJT. One was dissatisfied with his workplacement as he worked primarily loading and unloading. One had a near accident and did not feel comfortable driving Super B's. It is possible this individual was not skilled or confident enough to be given the responsibility of driving a Super B.

The *STSP* committee has discussed ways of ensuring students who receive their Class 1A from the program, meet their obligations and go to their workplacements. No satisfactory mechanism has been found which could be put in place to prevent students from dropping out at the point between receiving their licenses and beginning OJT. Screening for level of commitment to this

program and truck driving has been recommended and has been included in the application form and interview questionnaire.

As health problems became an issue during OJT, the application form and interview guide have been revised to screen for health issues. However, not all health problems can be detected as all of the people with health problems passed their learners medical and the two in the case above were diagnosed after OJT began.

Difficulties with OJT can be mitigated in several ways. As has been outlined in the OJT section of this report the following measures can be taken to help ensure a successful OJT:

- Providing the carriers with complete information before they commit to the program and during the program as to what their responsibilities are;
- Providing information to the in-cab coaches about what skill areas the student needs to learn;
- Communicating with the carriers and students on an on-going basis to help deal with any problems or issues that arise;
- Making clear to the student what they can expect from their carrier and what their carrier expects of them.

6.14 Administration

Although the administration of the program generally ran smoothly, there are three main factors hampering administration of the program.

1. *Geography* – MTIEAC and much of the Manitoba trucking industry is located in Winnipeg. In Saskatchewan the program was dispersed among three centres. If the program were to be repeated in the same manner as the pilot, administration over the entire province would prove time consuming.
2. *Provincial program and regional funding system* – The sector partnership was designed as a mechanism to address HR and training issues on a province wide basis. Funding and communications through the CSCES were delivered on a regional basis. This led to inconsistencies in the program. It also required a great deal of coordination and communication about aspects of the program that were specific to the region.
3. *Bureaucracy* – The coordinator for the project communicated with the training providers, students, carriers and CSCES. CSCES representatives communicated with the student, the coordinator, the training provider, and other government agencies, such as Employment Insurance, that had an interest in the student. Subsequently information was not always communicated in as timely a fashion as it could have been. For example, if a student quit the program early, the carrier typically alerted the coordinator. The coordinator tried to contact the student and find out what was happening. The coordinator also had to alert the CSCES representative who had their own process to deal with halting payments. Some students were in an overpayment position as a result.

APPENDIX B: Evaluation Report – Second Driver Training Program

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1.0 Introduction

The second driver training program was initiated as a result of an identified need by the members of the Saskatchewan Trucking Sector Partnership (STSP) based primarily on the results of the evaluation of the first driver training program.

Strategies were implemented to reduce co-ordination costs primarily by having the two training providers, Saskatchewan Trucking Association (STA) and Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) Woodland Campus taking more of a lead role in the co-ordination of the advertising, orientation, interviews, screening and selection of the students and delivery of the program. The following is the evaluation of the second driver training program.

2.0 Project Goals and Objectives

The objectives for the delivery of the second driver training program were:

- To improve on the following areas of difficulty that were identified during the delivery of the first training program:
  - Increase the 6 week in-school portion;
  - Allow for more lead time between the orientation, interviewing/recruitment and course start date to allow the candidates sufficient time to be interviewed by the carriers, apply and secure funding and to obtain their Class 1A learner's license;
  - Including drug and alcohol testing; and
  - Streamline and enhance the orientation, application forms and interview/selection of the candidates.
- To gain and encourage greater acceptance by the industry for the driver training program.
- To spread the co-ordination responsibility amongst the partners of the STSP, particularly the two training providers in order to reduce outside co-ordination time and costs.

3.0 Program Overview

The criteria, orientation, application and interview process including the carrier interview and sponsorship, funding and acceptance process were changed to incorporate the following:

Criteria: individuals are required to meet certain basic criteria to be considered for enrollment in the program. The changes were:

- Rather than requiring the applicant to not be in a surchargable position, the applicants were required to have a clean driver's abstract as this was seen as a better indicator of a person's responsibility and history behind the wheel;
- Those who were under 21 years of age were accepted because carriers did not necessarily require everyone to be able to drive in the United States of America (USA); and
- The requirement to take a qualifying test was deferred for this program, but there was a consensus that some form of test should become standard for future programs.

Orientation: An information package highlighting details of the program and a suggested topics list was provided to the speakers prior to the orientation sessions. In addition, it was made clear to the applicants of what items should be purchased and what documentation is needed prior to the commencement of the training program.

Application: The application form was revised.

Interview: The interview guide was revised to include reference checks.

The training program: The two training providers (STA and SIAST Woodland Campus) determined that it was best to continue to use the Canadian Trucking Human Resource Council (CTHRC) Earning your Wheels (EYW) curriculum. Further, it was agreed because the EYW program is very intensive, the driver program would be increased to a total of 16 weeks in length, broken down as follows:

- 7 weeks of in-class and in-cab training; and
- 9 weeks of on-the-job training.

The program is now in complete alignment with the CTHRC EYW curriculum.

4.0 Implementation of Driver Program

4.1 Training Providers – STA and SIAST Woodland Campus

The training providers prepared the schedule for delivery of the second driver training program and took on a more active role in the co-ordination of the program. It should be noted, the province was divided with the STA handling the south, primarily focused in Regina and Moose Jaw, while SIAST Woodland Campus handled the northern portion, namely Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

4.2 The Partners

The partners in the project and their respective involvement was the same for this program as they were for the first program.

4.3 Expected Outcomes

The same expected outcomes that were defined in the first program were kept the same for the second program.

4.4 Program Schedule and Tasks

The following chart represents the program scheduled and tasks undertaken from commencement to conception.

Alert Drivers Task Team to changes to pilot and get volunteers for screening process (either through meeting or other).	August 24, 2000
Secure funding support Communicate with involved CSCES centres to ensure support [presentations were made last time but might not be needed this time], alert them to changes, and confirm funding.	August 25, 2000
Secure work-placements Communicate with carriers, confirm work placements, let them know about changes to project, may need new carriers (personal meetings were held last time and likely will only be needed for carriers new to the process).	August 25, 2000
Orientations In 3 locations, book rooms at CSCES centres, complete and hang posters, arrange for ads in papers, set up sign-up process, finalize hand out materials, arrange for speakers (carriers, CSCES reps, training providers & coordinator/MC), give volunteer carrier hand out on speaking at orientation, have applications and screening tests prepared, alert all involved and Drivers Task Team of orientation schedule (example in communications folder/newsletter), complete orientations.	Sept 7-8, 2000
Applications Set deadline, applicants should include application, copy of drivers abstract, and resume, late or incomplete applications not considered, make copies, set review times with review committee (this took a full day last time), establish screening criteria and method, screen applicants.	Sept 11-15, 2000
Interviews Set up interview times, call selected applicants (STA called unselected applicants last time too), establish interview criteria and method with interview committee before hand, use guide/do interviews in 3 locations.	Sept 18-19, 2000
Selection Select candidates going to carries with interview committee, prepare congratulations and instruction letters, alert carriers and provide them with a list of candidates, tell all candidates of their status, arrangement to have them pick up instructions and carrier list.	Sept 22, 2000

Carrier interviews arrangement and support Monitor progress of students, send MoA once selection has been made, ensure everyone signs MoAs and sends them in, communicate with training providers and funders to keep them up to date.	Sept 25-Oct 20, 2000
Funding Send acceptance letter to funders, ensure cost is understood (i.e. does tuition include taxes?) keep carriers up to date on student status	Oct 22, 2000
D & A Test	Oct 23-27, 2000
Training (up to training provider) 7 weeks.	Nov 6-Dec 22, 2000
Work placements Was up to training provider to monitor but this didn't really happen, need to ensure monitor sheets are used and turned in, phone calls to monitor as well, anticipate difficulties (students not showing up, complaints about the carrier). 9 weeks.	Jan 8 – March 9, 2001
Evaluation of Students, CSCES, carriers, team members, training providers, etc. Phone and personal interviews, review of document, experience of co-ordinating program, write and present report.	March 1-23, 2001
Final Report	March 28, 2001

5.0 Evaluation and Outcomes

5.1 Applications

In total, 84 individuals attended the orientation in Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. From this 57 applied to one of the two programs that were planned to be offered, with the majority being in Regina. No applications were received from Saskatoon. 47 of the applicants were actually interviewed. After the initial interviews, an additional three were added in Regina. In the south 22 candidates were assessed by the interview panel as having favorable qualities that would make them suitable for the trucking industry. In the north, Prince Albert, 7 applicants were selected through the process done by SIAST Woodland Campus.

The interviews were conducted with the help of industry personnel, which resulted in a total of 29 potential candidates suitable for the training program.

5.2 Carrier Placements

Following completion of the interviews, the 29 candidates were given a list of interested carriers who had indicated a willingness to supply placements for the on-the-job training portion of the program. The candidates were encouraged to arrange meetings to apply to those companies.

5.3 Funding

At the same time as receiving the list of companies the candidates were advised to pursue funding options. The options included Student Loans, Reachback, Employment Insurance or Skills Training Benefit (STB). Only four candidates were successful in securing funding to

cover the training costs, which included a tuition of $8,500.00. A fifth candidate under Employment Insurance was approved for the program just prior to the start date.

There were a variety of reasons as to why only a few were eligible for financial assistance including:

- The high cost of this program being weighed against the lower cost training programs that are readily available;
- Did not meet funding criteria (i.e. previous outstanding loans; too much in personal assets);
- Some candidates weren't prepared to register for such a long program when there are shorter length programs available and at a much lower cost.

5.4 Training Program

In total, five candidates started the in-school part of the training and four completed. However, only three went on to complete the practicum placement with the carrier. Of these, two successfully completed the placement and both are now working at the company where they did their placement. The third candidate that was not successful with the placement, did attain their Class 1A License. The fourth candidate (who first chose not to participate in the placement) has since changed their mind and is presently seeking to find a carrier to do the placement.

The placement component continues to be an area where better monitoring and communication between the training provider, carrier and student is needed. This substantiates the need to have a program co-ordinator, separate and independent of the training provider and the carries. This was a similar observation in the previous driver training program.

5.5 Evaluation Outcomes

The following summarizes the outcomes of the evaluation:

- Despite the low enrolment, including the low completion rate, the two who did complete the total program have been successful in attaining employment and a third has obtained their Class 1A License;
- Securing funding for those candidates who were deemed to meet the industry criteria is proving to be frustrating, especially for the training providers and the students;
- The orientation and selection process established for the first driver training program and refined following that program appears to have addressed to some extent the issues, such as ensuring the right type of candidate has been recruited for the training;
- On-going co-ordination by one person throughout the whole program was missing and recognized particularly by the training providers as very important to the overall success of the program;
- Even though the numbers were low, a greater percentage than the first program did go on to participate in the practicum with a carrier. This will increase more, should the fourth person be successful in securing a placement with a carrier;
- The carriers continue to be willing participants in both the selection and interviewing process and the subsequent placement site for the students;

- The information package created for the orientation has assisted in better communication regarding the expectations of the industry, training providers and funding agencies;
- Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services to a large extent are co-operative, although there is a matter of judging the merits of this program in terms of cost and access to employment over the other less expensive training programs available;
- Dividing the province geographically for locating the training providers closer to home communities has reduced reluctance of the students to find a placement;
- The two training providers (STA and SIAST Woodland Campus) have indicated their intention to not continue with the delivery of the driver training program primarily due to the fact that the time and resources required to undertake the delivery of the program is not justified based on the results and the issues of funding, sponsorship and the apparent lack of industry willingness to support the program;
- The program is difficult to sell because industry is still taking just about anybody for a job and not requiring training to be a requirement for hiring; and
- There is hesitancy on the part of some of the potential students to commit to a training program of this length because of the corresponding high cost and the availability of many shorter programs that are a lot less costly.

6.0 Conclusions

With the situation as it stands with the STA and SIAST Woodland Campus and the difficulties experienced in securing financial assistance for qualified applicants, along with the fact that industry is continuing to hire people outside of the program that was designed by and for them, there is no perceived demand to continue delivering this program.

It appears, until there is a situation where training becomes a pre-requisite before hiring and the commitment to accept a higher training standard is evident by all the stakeholders associated with the trucking industry, the time, resources and costs required to co-ordinate and deliver this program do not justify the means.

A significant step has been taken toward the goal of providing a better training and safer driver for the industry through the establishment of this driver training program. However, the STSP feels the work and effort that was put into the development and delivery of the driver training program may be as much as five years ahead of its time in gaining the required recognition and willingness from industry for support.